

MR. O'LEARY'S
REMARKS
ON THE
REV. JOHN WESLEY'S LETTERS.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]



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MR. O'LEARY'S *H*

R E M A R K S

ON THE *H*

REV. MR. WESLEY'S LETTERS,

IN DEFENCE OF THE

PROTESTANT ASSOCIATIONS

I N E N G L A N D.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

MR. WESLEY'S LETTERS.

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M DCC LXXX.



LETTER

FROM THE

REV. MR. JOHN WESLEY, M. A.

TO THE PRINTER.

SIR,

SOME time ago a pamphlet was sent me, entitled, "An Appeal from the Protestant Association to the people of Great Britain." A day or two since, a kind of answer to this was put into my hand, which pronounces "Its style contemptible, its reasoning futile, and its object malicious." On the contrary, I think the style of it is clear, easy and natural; the reasoning, in general, strong and conclusive; the object, or design, kind and benevolent. And in pursuance of the same kind and benevolent design, namely, to preserve our happy constitution, I shall endeavour to confirm the substance of that tract, by a few plain arguments.

With persecution I have nothing to do. I persecute no man for his religious principles. Let

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there be as "boundless a freedom in religion," as any man can conceive. But this does not touch the point: I will set religion, true or false, utterly out of the question. Suppose the Bible, if you please, to be a fable. and the Koran to be the word of God. I consider not, whether the Romish religion be true or false; I build nothing on one or the other supposition. Therefore away with all your common-place declamations about intolerance and persecution for religion! Suppose every word of Pope Pius's creed to be true; suppose the Council of Trent to have been infallible: yet, I insist upon it, That no government, not Roman Catholic, ought to tolerate men of the Roman Catholic persuasion.

I prove this by a plain argument, (let him answer it that can;)--That no Roman Catholic does or can give security for its allegiance or peaceable behaviour, I prove thus-- It is a Roman Catholic maxim, established not by private men, but by a public council, that "No Faith is to be kept with heretics." This has been openly avowed by the council of Constance: but it never was openly disclaimed (whether private persons avow or disavow it). It is a fixed maxim of the Church of Rome. But as long as it is so, nothing can be more plain, than that the members of that church can give no reasonable security to any government of their allegiance or peaceable behaviour. Therefore they ought not to be tolerated by any government, Protestant, Mahometan, or Pagan.

You

You may say, "Nay but you will take an oath of allegiance." True, five hundred oaths; but the maxim, "No faith is to be kept with heretics," sweeps them all away as a spider's web. So that still, no governors that are not Roman Catholics, can have any security of their allegiance.

Again, Those who acknowledge the spiritual power of the Pope, can give no security of their allegiance to any government; but all Roman Catholics acknowledge this: therefore they can give no security for their allegiance.

The power of granting pardons for all sins past, present, and to come, is and has been, for many centuries, one branch of his spiritual power.

But those who acknowledge him to have this spiritual power, can give no security for their allegiance: since they believe the Pope can pardon rebellions, high treasons, and all other sins whatsoever.

The power of dispensing with any promise, oath or vow, is another branch of the spiritual power of the Pope. And all who acknowledge his spiritual power must acknowledge this. But whoever acknowledges the dispensing power of the Pope, can give no security of his allegiance to any government.

Oaths and promises are none: they are light as air; a dispensation makes them all null and void.

Nay, not only the Pope, but even a priest, has power to pardon sins! this is an essential doctrine of the Church of Rome. But they that acknow-

ledge this, cannot possibly give any security for their allegiance to any government. Oaths are no security at all; for the priest can pardon both perjury and high treason.

Setting, then, religion aside, it is plain, that upon principles of reason, no government ought to tolerate men, who cannot give any security to that government for their allegiance and peaceable behaviour. But this no Romanist can do, not only while he holds, that "No faith is to be kept with heretics," but so long as he acknowledges either priestly absolution, or the spiritual power of the pope.

"But the late act," you say, "does not either tolerate or encourage Roman Catholics." I appeal to matter of fact,---Do not the Romanists themselves understand it as a toleration? You know they do. And does it not already, let alone what it may do by-and-by, encourage them to preach openly, to build chapels, at Bath and elsewhere, to raise seminaries, and to make numerous converts, day by day, to their intolerant, persecuting principles? I can point out, if need be, several of the persons: and they are increasing daily.

But "Nothing dangerous to English liberty is to be apprehended from them." I am not certain of that:---some time since a Romish priest came to one I knew, and after talking with her largely, broke out, "You are no heretic! you have the experience of a real Christian!" "And would you," she asked, "burn me alive?" He said, "God

“God forbid!---Unless it were for the good of the church.”

Now what security could she have had for her life, if it had depended on that man? The good of the church would have burst all the ties of truth, justice and mercy. Especially when seconded by the absolution of a priest, or, if need were a papal pardon.

If any one please to answer this, and to set his name, I shall probably reply :---but the productions of anonymous writers I do not promise to take any notice of.

I AM, SIR,

YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT,

CITY ROAD,
JANUARY 21, 1780.

JOHN WESLEY,

A
D E F E N C E
OF THE
PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION.

VARIOUS pieces, under different signatures, having appeared in the public prints, casting unjust reflections on the Protestant Association and tending to quiet the minds of the Protestants at the present alarming crisis, by insinuating that there is no danger arising from the toleration of Popery, and that such associations are unnecessary ; I think it a piece of justice, which I owe to my countrymen, to give them a plain and true account of the views of this assembly, and lay before them the reasons which induced them to form this Association, and determined them to continue it.

Whether the gentlemen, who have favoured the public with their remarks on this occasion, are really Protestants, or Protestant Dissenters, as they
file

file themselves; or whether they are Papists in disguise, who assume the name of Protestants, that they may be able to undermine the Protestant cause with the greater success, is neither easy nor necessary to determine; but is easy to see that they are either totally ignorant of the subject on which they write, or else they wilfully disguise it.

The pieces I refer to are written with different degrees of temper. One gentleman in particular appears to be very angry, and loads the Association, and their friends, with the most illiberal and unmanly abuse. If this gentleman had clearly stated the cause of his resentment, he might have been answered; but as he appears to be angry at he knows not what, he can only be pitied. Others have written with more candour and moderation, and would have been worthy regard had they not been deficient in point of argument. If these are sincerely desirous of being informed, they are requested to attend to the following particulars.

However unconcerned the present generation may be, and unapprehensive of danger from the amazing growth of Popery; how calmly soever they may behold the erection of Popish chapels, hear of Popish schools being opened, and see Popish books publicly advertised, they are to be informed that our ancestors, whose wisdom and firmness have transmitted to us those religious and civil liberties which we now enjoy, had very different conceptions of this matter; and had they acted with that coldness, indifference, and stupidity, which seems to have seized the present age,

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we had now been sunk into the most abject state of misery and slavery, under an arbitrary prince and Popish government.

It was the opinion of our brave, wise, circumspect, and cautious ancestors, that an open toleration of the Popish religion, is inconsistent with the safety of a free people, and a Protestant government. It was thought by them, that every convert to Popery was, by principle, an enemy to the constitution of this country; and as it was supposed that the Roman Catholic religion promoted rebellion against the state, there was a very severe law made to prevent the propagation of it. Such was the state of things in the reign of the great Elizabeth: and Popery having, notwithstanding such restriction, gained ground in the reign of James the Second, though the encouragement it then received from the state, was not equal to what it has now obtained. The nation was alarmed, and the noble and resolute stand which the Protestants then made against the advances of Popery, produced the Revolution.

In the reign of William the Third, the State was thought to be in danger from the encroachments of Rome, to prevent which, the act of Parliament was made which is now in the most material parts repealed, and several Protestants being of opinion that this repeal will, in its consequences, act as an open toleration of the Popish religion, they are filled with the most painful apprehensions. They think that liberty, which they value more than their lives, and which they would
piously

piously transmit to their children, to be in danger. They are full of the most alarming fears that chains are forging at the anvil of Rome for the rising generation. They fear that the Papists are undermining our happy constitution. They see the purple power of Rome advancing by hasty strides, to overspread this once happy nation. They shudder at the thought of darkness and ignorance, misery and slavery, spreading their sable wings over this highly favoured isle. Their souls are pained for their rights and liberties as men, and their hearts tremble for the ark of God.

Inspired with such sentiments, and under the influence of such reasonable and well grounded fears, they think it a duty which they owe to themselves, their posterity, their religion, and their God, to unite as one man, and take every possible, loyal and constitutional measure, to stop the progress of that soul-deceiving and all enslaving superstition which threatens to overspread the land. It is to be hoped, that an attempt so just and reasonable, will be crowned with success; but should it fail through the supineness or groundless prejudices of those who ought to stand first in this cause, the members of this association will enjoy the satisfaction of a self-approving mind, conscious of having done its duty; while those who meanly desert the Protestant cause, and tamely suffer the encroachments of Rome, may see their error when it is too late, and be filled with bitterness and remorse at a conduct so mean and despicable, and so unworthy their profession.

Whatever

Whatever such persons may think of themselves and their conduct, and however they may dress themselves up in the splendid robes of candour and moderation, they are to be informed that their conduct is highly criminal, and may be attended with the most deplorable consequences; as by their neglecting to appear on this great occasion, they give our rulers reason to conclude, that it is the sense of the nation that Popery should be tolerated.

It is sincerely to be lamented, that Protestants in general are not more apprehensive of the danger. Have they forgot the reign of bloody queen Mary? Have they forgot the fires in Smithfield, and can they behold the place without emotion where their fathers died? Will it ever be believed in future times, that persons of eminent and distinguished rank among the Protestants, and persons of high and exalted religious characters, refused to petition against Popery, and let it overspread our nation without opposition? Will it be believed that Englishmen were so far degenerated from the noble spirit of their ancestors, as tamely to bow the neck to the yoke of Rome? "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughter of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."

It is not to be wondered at that the Papists, either openly or in disguise, take every method to prevent the just and reasonable view of the Protestant Association, and therefore represent them

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as factious, seditious, and enemies to toleration. These charges, and every other which the malice of our enemies, or the groundless fears and prejudices of our mistaken friends shall hereafter exhibit, will be separately and distinctly considered in the course of these letters; and such an account given of the views of the Protestant Association, and the line of conduct which they have pursued, and intend to pursue, in order to accomplish the great end for which they associate, as will I hope, obviate every objection, remove every scruple, and excite the Protestants to join hand in hand, and unite as one man in that cause, in which their present and future welfare is so nearly concerned, by.

J. W.

REMARKS

REMARKS

ON THE

REV. MR. WESLEY'S LETTERS.

BY THE

REV. MR. ARTHUR O'LEARY,

(ADDRESSED TO THE COMMITTEE FOR CONDUCTING
THE FREE PRESS, AND TAKEN FROM THE FREE-
MAN'S JOURNAL.)

GENTLEMEN,

I Know that it is loss of time, and a loss to the public, impatient for a paper in which they have first discovered the outlines of their country's rights, and from whence they daily expect new illustrations on the most important subjects, to take up the Freeman's Journal with idle controversy. Were controversy the subject, I should be the last to enter the list. In your paper, which has already made its way to the continent, on account of the late exertions of the Irish, and which should contain nothing unworthy the nervous eloquence and liberal principles of your numerous and learned correspondents,

correspondents, Mr. Wesley, in a syllogistical method, and the jargon of the schools, has arraigned the Catholics all over the world, with their kings and subjects, their prelates and doctors, as liars, perjurers, patentees of guilt and perjury, authorised by their priests to violate the sacred rules of order and justice; and unworthy of being tolerated even by *Turks and Pagans**. Such a charge carries with it, its own confutation. But are there not prejudiced people still in the world? The nine skins of parchment, filled with the names of petitioners against the English Catholics, owe the variety of their signatures to pulpit declamations, and inflammatory pamphlets, teeming with Mr Wesley's false assertions; and, to the disgrace of the peerage, in this variety of signatures, is not the lord's hand-writing stretched near the scratch of the cobbler's awl? For the parchment would be profaned, if the man who does not know how to write, made the sign of the †.

I am a member of that Communion which Mr Wesley aspersed in so cruel a manner. I disclaimed upon oath, in presence of Judge Henn, the creed which Mr Wesley attributes to me. I have been the first to unravel the intricacies of that very oath of allegiance proposed to the Roman Catholics, as it is worded in a manner, which, at first sight, seems abstruse. And, far from believing it lawful to *violate faith with here-*

* See page 2 of this Pamphlet.

tics, I solemnly swear, without *equivocation*, or the danger of perjury, that, in a Catholic country where I was chaplain of war, I thought it a crime to engage the King of England's soldiers or sailors into the service of a Catholic monarch, against their Protestant sovereign---I resisted the solicitations, and ran the risk of incurring the displeasure of a minister of state, and losing my pension; and my conduct was approved of by all the divines in a monastery, to which I then belonged, who all unanimously declared, that, in conscience, I could not have behaved otherwise. Mr. Wesley may consider me as a fictitious character: but should he follow his *precursor*, I mean his letter wasted to us over the British channel, and, on his mission from Dublin to Bandon, make Cork his way, Doctor Berkely, parish minister near Middleton, Captains Stanner, French, and others, who were prisoners of war in the same place, and at the same time, can fully satisfy him as to the reality of my existence in the line already described; and that in the beard which I then wore, and which, like that of Sir Thomas More, *never committed any treason*, I never concealed either poison or dagger to destroy my Protestant neighbour; though it was long enough to set all Scotland in a blaze, and to deprive Lord George Gordon of his *senses*.

Should any of the Scotch missionaries attend Mr. Wesley into this kingdom, and bring with them any of the stumps of the faggots, with which Henry the eighth, his daughters Mary and Elizabeth,

zabeth, and the learned James the First, roasted the heretics of their times in Smithfield. or some of the faggots with which the Scotch saints, of whose proceedings Mr. Wesley is become the apologist, have burnt the houses of their inoffensive Catholic neighbours, we will convert them to their proper use. In Ireland the revolution of the great Platonic year is almost completed. Things are re-instated in their primitive order. And the faggot, which, without any mission from Christ, preached the gospel by orders of Catholic and Protestant kings, is confined to the kitchen. Thus, what formerly roasted the man at the stake, now helps to feed him. And nothing but the severity of winter, and the coldness of the climate in Scotland, could justify Mr. Wesley in urging the rabble to light it. This is a bad time to introduce it amongst us, when we begin to be formidable to our foes, and united amongst ourselves. And to the glory of Ireland be it said, We never condemned but murderers, and perpetrators of unnatural crimes, to the faggot.

By a statute of Henry the Sixth. every Englishman of the Pale * was bound to shave his upper lip, or clip his whiskers, in order to distinguish himself from an Irishman. By this mark of distinction, it seems that what Campion calls in his old English, *glib*. and what we call the beard, as well as the complexion and size of both peo-

* See the statutes of that king, and lament the effects of divisions fomented by sovereigns.

ple, were much the same. In my opinion it had tended more to their mutual interest, and the glory of that monarch's reign, not to go to the nicety of *splitting a hair*, but encourage the growth of their *fleeces*, and inspire them with such mutual love for each other, as to induce them to kiss one another's beards, as brothers salute each other at Constantinople after a few days absence. I am likewise of opinion, that Mr. Wesley, who prefaces his letter with, "The interest of the Protestant religion," would reflect more honour on his ministry, in promoting the happiness of the people, by preaching love and union, than in widening the breach, and increasing their calamities by division. The English and Irish were at that time of the same religion, but, divided in their affections, were miserable. Though divided in speculative opinions, if united in sentiment, we would be happy. The English settlers breathed the vital air in England, before they inhaled the soft breezes of our temperate climate. The present generation can say, "Our fathers and grandfathers have been born, bred, and buried here. We are Irishmen, as the descendants of the Normans, who have been born in England, are Englishmen."

Thus, born in an island in which the ancients might have placed their Hesperian gardens and golden apples, the temperature of the climate, and quality of the soil, *inimical* to *poisonous insects*, have cleaned our veins from the *sour* and *acid* blood of the Scythians and Saxons. We begin

to open our eyes, and to learn wisdom from the experience of ages : we are tender-hearted : we are good-natured : we have feelings : we shed tears on the urns of the dead : deplore the loss of hecatombs of victims slaughtered on the gloomy altars of religious bigotry : cry in seeing the ruins of cities over which fanaticism has displayed the funeral torch, and sincerely pity the blind zeal of our Scotch and English neighbours, whose constant character is to pity none, for erecting the banners of persecution, at a time when the inquisition is abolished in Spain and Milan, and the Protestant gentry are caressed at Rome, and live unmolested in the luxuriant plains of France and Italy.

The statute of Henry the Sixth is now grown obsolete. The razor of calamity has shaved our lower and upper lips, and given us smooth faces. Our land is uncultivated, our country a desert. Our natives are forced into the service of foreign kings, storming towns, and in the very heat of slaughter, tempering Irish courage with Irish mercy*. All our misfortunes flow from long reigning intolerance, and the storms, which, gathering first in the Scotch and English atmosphere, never failed to burst over our heads. We are too wise to quarrel about religion. The Roman Catholics sing their psalms in Latin with a few inflections of

* Count Dillon and the Irish brigade could not be prevailed on by D'Etaing to put the English garrison to the sword. We will not kill our countrymen, said they. Would it not be wiser to let these gallant men go to mass, and serve their own king?

voice. Our Protestant neighbours sing the same psalms in English on a larger scale of musical notes. We never quarrel with our honest and worthy neighbours, the Quakers, for not singing at all; nor shall we ever quarrel with Mr. Wesley for *raising his voice to Heaven*, and warbling forth his canticles on whatever tune he pleases, whether it be the tune of *Guardian-Angels*, or *Lango-lee*. We like *social harmony*, and in civil music hate *discordance*. Thus when we go to the shambles we never enquire into the butcher's religion, but into the quality of his meat: we care not whether the ox was fed in the Pope's territories, or on the mountains of Scotland, provided the joint be good: for though there be many *heresies* in old books, we discover neither *heresy* nor *superstition* in beef and claret. We divide them cheerfully with one another, and, though of different religions, we sit over the bowl with as much cordiality as if we were at a *love feast*. The Protestant Associations of Scotland and England may pity us: but we feel more comfort than if we were scorching one another with fire and faggot. Instead of singing "Peace to men of good will on earth," does Mr Wesley intend to sound the Fury Alecto's horn, or the war-shell of the Mexicans? The Irish, who have no resource but in their union, does he mean to arm them against each other? One massacre, to which the fanaticism of the Scotch and English regicides gave rise, is more than enough: Mr. Wesley should not sow the seeds of a second. When he felt the first
fruits

Fruits and illapses of the spirit ; when his zeal, too extensive to be confined within the majestic temples of the church of England, or the edifying meeting houses of the other Christians, prompted him to travel over most parts of Europe and America, and to establish a religion and houses of worship of his own, what opposition has he not met with from the civil magistrates ! with what insults from the rabble ! broken benches, dead cats, and pools of water bear witness ? Was he then the trumpeter of persecution ? was his pulpit changed into Hudibras's " drum ecclesiastic ? " did he abet banishment and proscription on the score of conscience ? Now that his *tabernacle* is established in peace, after the clouds having borne testimony to his mission*, he complains in his second letter, wherein he promises to continue the fire which he has already kindled in England, that people of exalted ranks in church and state have refused entering into a mean confederacy against the laws of nature, and the rights of mankind. In his first letter he disclaims persecution on the score of religion, and in the same breath strikes out a creed of his own for the Roman Catholics, and says, " That they should not be tolerated even amongst the Turks." Thus the satyr in the fable breathes hot and cold in the same blast, and a lamb of peace is turned inquisitor. " But is not that creed mentioned by Mr Wesley, the

* See an abridgment of Wesley's journal, wherein he says, that in preaching one day at Kinsale, a cloud pitched over him.

creed of the Roman Catholics?" By right it should be theirs, as it is so often bestowed on them, and that, according to the civil law, a free gift becomes the property of the person to whom it is bestowed, if there be no legal disqualification on either side. But the misfortune is, that the Catholics and the framers of the fictitious creed so often refused, and still forced on them, resemble the Frenchman and the blunderer in the comedy; one forces into the other's mouth a food which he cannot relish, and against which his stomach revolts.

Mr. Wesley places in the front of his lines, the *general* council of Constance, places the Pope in the centre, and brings up the rear of his squadrons with a confabulation between a priest and a woman, whilst his letters are skirmishing on the wings. Let us march from the front to the rear, for *religious warriors seldom observe order*.

A priest then said to a woman whom Mr Wesley *KNOWS*, "I see you are no heretic: you have the experience of a real Christian." "And would you burn me?" said she. "God forbid," replied the priest, "except for the good of the church." Now this priest must be descended from some of those who attempted to blow up a river with gunpowder, in order to drown a city*. Or he must have taken her for a witch; whereas, by his own confession, "she was no heretic."

* Amongst other plots attributed to the Roman Catholics in the reign of Charles the First, this extraordinary one was charged upon them.—See Hume.

A gentleman

A gentleman whom I *know*, declared to me upon his honour, that he heard Mr. Wesley repeat, in a sermon preached by him in the city of Cork, the following words: "A little bird cried out in Hebrew,---O Eternity! Eternity! who can tell the length of Eternity?" I am then of opinion, that a *little Hebrew bird* gave Mr. Wesley the important information about the *priest* and the *woman*: one story is as interesting as the other, and both are equally alarming to the Protestant interest. Hitherto it is a drawn battle between us: from the rear then, let us advance to the van, and try if the *general* council of Constance, which Mr. Wesley places at the head of his *legions*, be impenetrable to the sword of truth.

After reading the ecclesiastical history concerning that council, and Doctor Hay's answer to Archibald Drummond, I have gone through the drudgery of examining it all over in St. Patrick's library, when Mr. Wesley's letters made their appearance. The result of my researches is a conviction, that there is no such doctrine as "Violation of faith with heretics," authorised by that council. Pope Martin V. whom the fathers of that council elected, published a bull, wherein he declares, "That it is not lawful for a man to perjure himself on any account, even for the faith." Subsequent pontiffs have lopped off the excrescences of relaxed casuistry.

The Pope's *horns* then are not so dangerous as to induce Mr. Wesley to sing the lamentations of Jeremiah the prophet, deploring the loss of Jerusalem,

salem, or to send us from London an Hebrew elegy to be modulated on the key of the Irish *Ologone*. "Their souls are pained, and their hearts tremble for the ark of God*. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."

This same elegy resounded through Great Britain a little before the *ark* of England was destroyed, the sceptre wrested out of the hands of her king, her pontiffs deprived of their mitres, and her noblemen banished from her senate. Thus, as the Delphian sword slaughtered the victim in honour of the Gods, and dispatched the criminal on whom the sentence of the law was passed, the scripture is made subservient to profane, as well as sacred purposes. It recommends and enforces subordination, and, at the same time, becomes an arsenal from whence faction takes its arms. Like Boileau's heroes, in the Battle of the Books, we ran sack old councils; we disturb the bones of old divines, who, wrapped up in their parchment blankets, sleep at their ease on the shelves of libraries, where they would snore for ever, if the noise of the *gunpowder* on an anniversary day, or the restless hands of pamphlet writers, industrious in inflaming the rabble, did not rouse them from their slumber. Peace to their manes! The charity sermon preached in Dublin by Doctor Campbell, the anniversary sermon preached in Cork

* Well y's second Letter.

last November by Doctor la Malliere, and the discourse to the Echlinville volunteers, by Mr. Dickson, have done more good in one day, either by procuring relief for the distressed, or by promoting benevolence, peace, and a harmony amongst fellow-subjects of all denominations, than the folios written on Pope Joan have done in the space of two hundred years.

I must now sound the retreat, with a design to return to the charge, and to attack Mr. Wesley's first battery, on which he has mounted the *canons* of the council of Constance. If I cannot succeed from want of abilities, but not from want of the armour of truth, I am sure of making a retreat, in which it is impossible to cut me off. For in the very supposition that the council of Constance, and all the councils of the world, had defined 'Violation of faith with heretics,' as an article of faith, and that I do not believe it, 'Violation' then, 'of faith with heretics,' is no article of my belief. For, to form one's belief, it is not sufficient to read a proposition in a book. Interior conviction must captivate the mind. The Arian reads the Divinity of Christ in the New Testament, and still denies it: would Mr. Wesley assert that the Divinity of Christ is an article of the Arian faith? If then 'Violation of faith with heretics,' be the *tessera fidei*, the badge of the Roman Catholic religion, the Roman Catholics are all Protestants, and as well entitled to sing their psalms, as Mr. Wesley his canticles. I would not be one hour a member of any religion that would profess such a creed as Mr. Wesley has sent us from London.

You

You may be, perhaps, surpris'd, Gentlemen, that the introduction to a serious subject should favour so little of the gloom and fullness so familiar to polemical writers; or that the ludicrous and serious should be so closely interwoven with each other.-----

But remark a set of men who tax the nobility, gentry, and head clergy of England with *degeneracy*, for not degrading the dignity of their ranks and professions. Remark them exposing their parchments in meeting houses and vestries, begging the signatures of every peasant and mendicant, who comes to hear the Gospel, 'Wrong no man; he that loves his neighbour, fulfils the law,' &c. and those pious souls, 'pained and trembling for the ark of God,' running with the faggot to kindle the flames of sedition, and to oppress their neighbours. Remark in seventeen hundred and eighty, a lord with his hair cropped, a bible in his hand, turned elder and high-priest at the age of *twenty-three*, and fainting for the ARK OF ISRAEL.

In the fore-ground of this extraordinary picture, remark a MISSIONARY, who has reformed the very Reformation; separated from all the Protestant churches, and in *trimming* the vessel of religion, which he has brought into a *new dock*, has suffered as much for the sake of conscience, as Lodowick Muggleton or James Nailer, could register in their martyrology. Remark, that same gentleman inflaming the rabble, dividing his Majesty's subjects, propagating black slander, and throwing

throwing the gauntlet to the people who never provoked him. Is not fanaticism, the mother of cruelty, and the daughter of folly, the first charact^r in this *religious masquerade*? Is it not the first spring that gives motion to these extraordinary figures, so corresponsive to Hogarth's Enraged Musician? And in fencing with folly, have not the gravest authors handled the foils of ridicule? To the modern Footes, and Moli^{er}es, or to the young student in rhetoric who employs irony in enlarging on his theme, should I for ever leave the 'pained souls and trembling hearts,' of the Scotch Jonathan and the English Samuel, with their squadrons of Israelites fighting 'for the ark of the Lord,' if what they stile in England the Gordonian Associations, had not voted their thanks to Mr. Wesley, for what they call his *excellent letter*. Such a performance is worthy the approbation of such censors; and in their holy shrines the sacred relic should be reposit^d. In examining a performance, which contains in a small compass, all the horrors invented by wild and misguided zeal, set forth in the most bitter language, I shall confine myself to the strict line of an apologist, who clears himself and his principles from the foulest aspersions. To the public and their impartial reason, the appeal shall be made: to the sentiments implanted in the human breast, and to the conduct of man, not to the rubbish of the schools, Mr. Wesley should have made application, when he undertook to solve the interesting problem, Whether the Roman Catholics should be tolerat^d,

or persecuted? But inspired writers partake of the spirit of the *seers*, and copy as much as possible after the prophets; the prophet Ezekiel breathed on a pile of bones, and lo! a formidable army starting from the earth, and ranging itself in battle array. Mr. Wesley blows the dust of an old book, and lo! squadrons of religious warriors engaged in a crusade for the extirpation of the infidels.

The loyalty, the conduct, the virtues common to all, the natural attachments of man to his interest and country, the peaceable behaviour of the Roman Catholics, have no weight in the scale of candour and justice. An old council held four hundred years ago, is ransacked and misconstrued; a Roman Catholic is unworthy of being tolerated amongst the Turks, because Mr. Wesley puts on his spectacles to read old Latin.

I have the honour to remain,

Gentlemen,

Your humble and obedient servant,

MARY'S-LANE, DUBLIN,
FEBRUARY 28, 1780.

ARTHUR O'LEARY.

L E T T E R II.

(ADDRESSED AS THE FORMER).

GENTLEMEN,

FANATICISM is a kind of religious folly. We laughed at it in a former letter. Whoever has a mind to indulge his humour at our expence, is heartily welcome. You now expect a serious answer to a serious charge. I send you such as occurs.

“The council of Constance has openly avowed violation of faith with heretics. But it has never been openly disclaimed. Therefore,” concludes Mr. Wesley, “the Roman Catholics should not be tolerated amongst the Turks or Pagans.”

A council so often quoted in anniversary sermons, parliamentary debates, and flying pamphlets, challenges peculiar attention. We shall examine it with as much precision as possible, and with the more impartiality, as strict justice shall be done to all parties. Mr. Wesley *knows* that we are all Adam's children, who feel the

fatal impressions of our origin, and that ambition which took its rise in Heaven itself, often lurks in a corner of the sanctuary where the ministers of religion offer up their prayers, as well as in the cabinets of kings, where shrewd courtiers form their intrigues. At a time, then, when ambition, that insatiable desire of elevation; that worm which stings the heart, and never leaves it at rest, presented the universe with the extraordinary sight of three prelates, reviving the restless spirit of the Roman triumvirate, and disturbing the peace of mankind as much with their spiritual weapons, as Octavius, Anthony, and Lepidus had disturbed it with their armed legions. At a time when the broachers of new doctrines were kindling up the fire of sedition, and, after shaking the foundations of what was then the established religion, were shaking the foundations of thrones and empires. At that critical time, in fourteen hundred and fourteen, was held the council of Constance, with a design, as the fathers of that council express themselves, to reform the church in her head and members; and put an end to the calamities which the restless pride of three bishops, assuming the titles of Popes, by the names of Gregory the Twelfth, Benedict the Thirteenth, and John the Twenty-third, had brought on Europe, split into three grand factions by the ambition of the above-mentioned competitors. Such transactions in the ministers of a religion that preaches up peace and humility as the solid foundations on which the structure of all Christian virtues is to be raised,

raised, may startle the unthinking reader, and give him an unfavourable idea of religion: but we are never to confound the weakness of the minister with the holiness of his ministry.-----We respect the sanctuary in which Stephen officiated, ---though Nicholas profaned it: we revere the place from whence Judas fell,---and to which Matthias was promoted: the scriptures respect the chair of Moses,---though they censure several pontiffs who sat in it; and no Catholic canonizes the vices of Popes,---though he respects their station and dignity. The pontifical throne is still the same, whether it be filled by a cruel Alexander the Sixth, or a benevolent Ganganelli.

To the council of Constance was cited then John Hufs, a Bohemian, famous for propagating errors tending to tear the mitre from the heads of bishops, and wrest the sceptre from the hands of kings: in a word, he was obnoxious to church and state; and if Mr. Wesley and I preached up his doctrine *in the name of God*, we would be condemned *in the name of the King*. The Protestant and Catholic divines would banish us from their universities, and the judges of assize would exterminate us from civil society. Such a doctor had no indulgence to expect from a council, which, after deposing two rivals for the popedom, condemned a third for contumacy, and elected another in his room.

But in mentioning John Hufs, whose trial and execution at Constance have given rise to the foul charge of *violation of faith with heretics*, let none

imagine that I am an apologist for the fiery execution of persons, on the score of religious opinions. Let the legislators who were the first to invent the cruel method of punishing the errors of the mind with the excruciating tortures of the body, and anticipating the rigor of eternal justice, answer for their own laws. I am of opinion, that the true religion, propagated by the effusion of the blood of its martyrs, would still triumph without burning the flesh of heretics; and that the Protestant * and Catholic legislators who have substituted the blazing pile in the room of Phalaris's brazen bull, might have pointed out a more lenient punishment for victims who, in their opinion, had no prospect during the interminable space of a boundless eternity, but that of *passing from one fire into another*. If in enacting such laws, they had consulted the true spirit of religion, I believe the reformation of their own hearts would have been a more acceptable sacrifice to the Divinity, than hecatombs of human victims. "No God nor man," says Tertullian, "should be pleased with a forced service." "We are not to persecute those whom God tolerates," says St. Augustine. That faith is fictitious which is inspired by the edge of the sword.

But still the nature of society is such, that when once the common landmarks are set up, it op-

* The imperial laws which condemned heretics to the flames, have been put into execution by Calvin, Queen Elizabeth, James the First, etc.

poses the hand of the individual that attempts to remove them. Where one common mode of worship is established, and fenced by the laws of the state, whoever attempts to overthrow it, must expect to meet with opposition and violence, until custom softens the rigour of early prejudices, and reconciles us to men whose features and lineaments are like our own, but still seem strange to us, because their thoughts are different.

How far opposition to religious innovations is justifiable, is not our business to discuss. But the experience of ages evinces the fact; and in dissimilar circumstances, Mr. Wesley has made the trial. In kingdoms, where, as in the Roman Pantheon, every divinity had its altars, speculative deviations from the religion established by law, the singularity of love feasts and nocturnal meetings, so unusual among the modern Christians of every denomination, roused the vigilance of the magistrate, and influenced the rage of the rabble. Now, that custom has rendered Mr. Wesley's meeting houses and mode of worship familiar, and that all denominations enjoy a share of that religious liberty, whereof he would fain deprive his Roman Catholic neighbour, his matin hymns give no uneasiness either to the magistrate, or his neighbours. But had Mr. Wesley raised his notes on the high key of *civil discordance*---had he attempted by his sermons, his writings, and exhortations, to deprive the bishops of the established religion, of their croziers; kings of their thrones; and magistrates of the sword of justice; long ere
now

now would his *pious* labours have been crowned with martyrdom, and his name registered in the calendar of *Fox's saints*. Such, unfortunately, was the case of John Huls. Not satisfied with overthrowing what was then the established religion, and levelling the fences of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, he strikes at the root of all temporal power, and civil authority. He boldly asserts that "Princes, magistrates, &c. in the state of mortal sin, are deprived *ipso facto* of all power and jurisdiction."* In this doctrine was enveloped the seed of anarchy and sedition, which subsequent preachers unfolded to the destruction of peace and tranquility, almost all over Europe; and which Sir William Blackstone describes as follows: "The dreadful effects of such a religious bigotry, when actuated by erroneous principles, even of the Protestant kind, are sufficiently evident from the history of the Anabaptists † in Germany, the Covenanters in

* See the acts of the council of Constance in L'Abbe's Collection of councils.

† This is no imputation on the Anabaptists of our days, who are as peaceable and good men as any others. Men's opinions change with the times, as in different stages of life we change our thoughts, and settle at the age of forty the roving imagination of sixteen. Custom, and mutual intercourse amongst fellow-subjects of every denomination, would soon quench the remaining sparks of religious feuds, if distinctive laws were abolished. But, unfortunately for the society in which we live, the laws, whose aim should be to unite the inhabitants, are calculated to divide them. My neighbour distrusts me, because the penal laws held me forth as a reprobate before I was born, and during my life encourage him to seize my

in Scotland, and the deluge of sectaries in England, who murdered their sovereign, overturned the church and monarchy, shook every pillar of law, justice, and private property, and most devoutly established a kingdom of saints in their stead."--*Blackstone's Comment. Vol. 4. ch. 8.*

John Huss, then, after broaching the above-mentioned doctrines, and making Bohemia the theatre of intestine war, is summoned to appear before the council. He obtains a safe-conduct from the Emperor Sigismund, commanding governors of provinces, &c. not to molest him on his journey to, or return from, Constance; but to afford him every aid and assistance. In all the provinces and cities through which he passes, he gives public notice of his intention to appear before the council, and stand his trial. But instead of standing his trial, and retracting his errors, he attempts to make his escape, in

my horse, or drag me before a magistrate for saying my prayers, which reduces me to the sad necessity of hating him, or considering him as an enemy, if in the great struggle between nature and grace, religion does not triumph. Before Lewis the Fourteenth and George the First, repealed the laws against witches, every disfigured old woman was in danger of her life, and considered as a forceress. Since the *witch-making laws* have been repealed, there is not a witch in the land, and the dairy-maid is not under the necessity of using counter-charms to hinder the milk from being enchanted from her pail. Thus, if the penal laws, which, by a kind of omnipotence, create an original sin, making rogues of Catholics before they reach their hands to the tempting fruit, were once repealed, they would be as honest as their neighbours, and the objects of their love and confidence.

order

order to disseminate, and make them take deeper root. He is arrested and confined, in order that he should take his trial, after having *violated* his promise, and abused a safe-conduct granted him for the purpose of exculpating himself, or retracting his errors, if proved against him before his competent judges. It is here to be remarked, that John Hufs was an ecclesiastic; and that in spiritual cases the bishops were his only and competent judges. The boundaries of the two powers, I mean the church and state, being kept distinct; the censer left to the pontiff, and the sword to the magistrate; the church confined to her spiritual weapons; privation of life and limb, and corporal punishments being quite of the province of the state; one should not interfere with the other. As the body of the criminal is under the controul of the magistrate, too jealous of his privilege to permit the church to interfere with his power;---so, erroneous doctrines are under the controul of spiritual judges too jealous of their prerogatives, to permit the civil magistrate to interfere with their rights.---Hence when the partisans of Hufs raised clamours about his confinement, and pleaded his safe-conduct, the council published the famous decree which has given rise to so many cavils, for the space of four hundred years, though thousands of laws of a more important nature, and of which we now think but little, have been published since that time.

The

The council declares, " That every safe-con-
" duct granted by the emperor, kings, and other
" temporal princes, to heretics, or persons accused
" of heresy, ought not to be of any prejudice to
" the Catholic faith, or to the ecclesiastical jurif-
" diction; nor to hinder that such persons may
" and ought to be examined, judged, and punish-
" ed, according as justice shall require, if those
" heretics refuse to revoke their errors: and the
" person who shall have promised them security,
" shall not, in this case, be obliged to keep his
" promise, by whatever tie he may be engaged,
" because he has done all that is in his power to
" do." I appeal to the impartial public, Whether
that declaration of the council does not regard the
peculiar case of *safe-conducts* granted by temporal
princes, to persons who are liable to be tried
by competent and independent tribunals? and
Whether it be not an insult to candour and com-
mon sense, to give it such a latitude as to extend
it to every lawful promise, contract or engagement,
between man and man? As if the council of Con-
stance meant to authorize me to buy my neigh-
bour's goods, and after a solemn promise to pay
him, still to keep his substance. and break my
word. The church and state are two distinct and
independent powers, each in its peculiar line.---A
man is to be tried by the church for erroneous
doctrines: a temporal prince grants this man a
safe-conduct, to guard his person from any vio-
lence which may be offered him on his journey:
and to procure him a fair and candid trial, on
his

his appearance before his lawful judges. Has not this prince done all that is in his power to do? Doth his promise to such a man authorize him to interfere with a foreign and independent jurisdiction, or to usurp the rights of another? Do not the very words of the council, "Because he has done all that is in his power to do," prove that lawful promises are to be fulfilled?

Such juriconsults, whether Catholics or Protestants, such as Prenus, Speklam, and others, as I have accidentally read concerning the nature of safe-conduct, lay down for a general rule, that they are never granted to suspend the execution of the laws. *Salvus conductus contra jus non datur*. It were nugatory in the emperor Sigismund, presumptive heir to a kingdom, which Huf's doctrine had changed into a theatre of intestine wars, to grant a safe-conduct, the meaning and sense whereof would be equivalent to the following pass: "Although you have set kingdoms in a blaze, by striking at the vitals of temporal authority, and overthrown the established religion of the land, yet go to Constance and come back, without appearing before your lawful judges, or retracting doctrines which have caused such disturbances in church and state." Safe-conducts then are not granted to screen delinquents from punishment, when legally convicted; much less, to countenance disobedience to the laws, and disorder, by impunity.

The council was the most competent judge of Huf's doctrine, in which he steadfastly persevered

ed. Neither king nor emperor could deprive the bishops of privileges inseparably annexed to their characters, viz. spiritual jurisdiction, and the right of judging doctrines. Huss was degraded, and retrenched, according to the usual formalities, from a communion from which he had separated himself before. This is all the bishops could have done: this they acknowledge after the sentence of Huss's degradation was pronounced. "This sacred synod of Constance, considering that the church of Christ has nothing further that it can do, decrees to leave John Huss to the judgment of the state." His execution was, in consequence of the Imperial laws, enforced by the civil magistrate, as the execution of heretics in England and other Protestant states, has been in consequence of the Imperial laws adopted by such powers. The Protestant clergy, as well as the clergy of Constance, decided upon points of doctrine, and went no farther.

Thus we see, that this superannuated charge of *violation of faith with heretics*, resembles those nightly spectres which vanish upon a nearer approach. We find nothing in this council, relative to such a charge, but a dispute about a pass granted to a man who goes to take his trial before judges whose jurisdictions could not be superseded. Or if we intend to do justice to men with the same eagerness that we are disposed to injure them, we must acknowledge that the fathers of that council condemned lies, frauds, perjury, and those horrors which Mr. Wesley would vainly fix upon the Roman Catholics. The founda-

dations then on which Mr. Wesley has erected his aerial fabric, being once fapped, the superstructure must fall of course; and his long train of false and unchristian assertions are swept away as a *spider's web*, before the *wind of logical rules*. *From absurd premises follows an absurd conclusion.*

What greater absurdity than Mr. Wesley's insisting upon a general council's disclaiming a doctrine it never taught. If Mr. Wesley be so credulous as to believe that the Pope has horns, must we convene a general council to declare that his forehead is smooth? Is it not sufficient to disclaim the truth of the odious imputation, when the false creed is fixed on us? We are really of opinion, that whoever believes us capable of harbouring such sentiments, is capable of putting the horrid maxims in practice. He must have studied the human heart, not in the book of nature, but in Hobbes's *Leviathan*; and should curse his fate that Providence has been so unkindly partial to him.

Rousseau declares, that if he had been present at the resurrection of Lazarus, he would not have believed it. "The apparition," says he, "would have made a fool of me, by frightening me out of my senses, but it would never have made a convert of me."

If a general council were held in order to *disclaim* the ridiculous and abominable creed imputed to Roman Catholics; the sceptic, who gives no credit to their doctors and universities, to the oaths and declarations of millions, would give

give no credit to a convention of bishops with the Pope at their head.

Let the appeal be made, not to stubborn sceptics, but to those who listen to the voice of reason, and consult the heart. The interior monitor, when passion and prejudice are hushed into silence, is seldom consulted in vain. Let us not travel to Catholic states where perjury is punished with death, and every argument tending to prove that the Pope can absolve subjects from oaths, and grant a dispensation to commit all kinds of crimes, is confuted with a halter. Let us look nearer home, and compare what we see on one hand, with what is supposed on the other.

We see a million and half of Roman Catholics smarting under the most oppressive laws that the human heart could ever devise: When they were enacted, our ancestors had the lands of their fathers, and the religion of their education. If perjury had been an article of their belief, they could have secured their inheritance, by taking an oath of abjuration. If papal dispensations were, in their opinion, lenitives to an ulcerated conscience, when, or where could they have been more seasonably applied, than at that time and place, where the properties of millions depended on the application?

If oaths against conviction, dispensations with perjury, and anticipated absolutions from future crimes, were articles of their belief, they would have prevented the blazing comets which scorch the living, and spread their influence to the dor-

mitories of the dead, from kindling in their native air; and hindered cruelty, which is disarmed in the tyrant's breast at sight of the expiring victim, from pursuing them to the grave, and depriving them of the *cold* comfort of mingling their ashes with those of their ancestors*.

Those laws which have banished our nobility from the senate; deprived our gentry of the liberty of wearing a sword, either as a means of defence against the midnight assassin, or as a part of dress in the open day;---the merchant of the power of realizing the fruits of his industry, in obtaining landed security for his money, or the liberty of purchasing; the lower class of people of the liberty of becoming common soldiers, mayor's sergeants, or coal-measurers, and the valiant youth of serving his king, and reaping laurels in defence of his country;---these laws are still in being. It is true, to the honour of the Irish senate, they have staunched the blood flowing this long time past from one of the most tender veins of the human heart, by putting it out of the power of the profligate son to betray and rob his tender and hoary father. But, still

* The penal laws offered the most calling insult to the Roman Catholic gentry, at the time of their being enacted. Their burying places were in the ruins of old abbeys founded by their ancestors. A law was enacted, prohibiting to bury in those dreary haunts of cats and weasels, and a fine of ten shillings was to be levied on every person who assisted at the funeral.

the

the insidious neighbour can seize his neighbour's horse; the unfaithful husband can banish the chaste and virtuous wife, after the *oath* pledged in presence of God, at the nuptial solemnity; the designing villain can set fire to his house, and build a new one, at the expence of his Catholic neighbours, who were asleep whilst he himself was lighting the faggot*.

Thus, like a *running evil*, in a successive gradation, they ulcerate every part of the body: and, though the lenity of the magistrate is a kind of mollifying application, that may assuage the sore for a certain time; yet, whilst the noxious humour lurks within the recesses of the law, we can never expect a radical cure.

‘ It is needless to comment upon the spirit of
 “ such laws.---The very recital chills with hor-
 “ ror:” So remarks my learned and worthy ac-
 quaintance, Doctor Campbel. “ Let it not be
 “ argued, that these laws are seldom put in execu-
 “ tion. Is property to depend upon the cour-
 “ tesy of an avaricious, malignant neighbour?--
 “ Damocles was, perhaps, safe enough under the
 “ suspended sword of Dionysius; but the appre-
 “ hension of danger scared away those visions of

* Mr. O’Leary was present when the case was tried in the county court-house of Cork. He has likewise seen the venerable matron after twenty-four years marriage, banished from the perjured husband’s house, though it was proved in open court, that for six months before his marriage, he went to mass. But the law requires that he should be a year and a day of the same religion.

"happiness which he had seen in the envied
 "pomp of tyranny*." *Laws*, says the President
 Montesquieu, *which do all the mischief that can be
 done, in cold blood*; and to which Lucretius might
 allude in his famous Epiphonema: *Tantum religio
 potuit suadere malorum! Could religion be productive
 of such mischief!* That philosopher, who, in reading
 the epitaph of a voluptuous monarch, cried out
 that it was better suited to an ox than to a king,
Bove quam rege dignius, in reading the penal code,
 could form another antithesis: "The seal that
 "gave a sanction to such laws, should rather bear
 "the impress of the claws of a lion, than the
 "head of a Queen."†

Such are the laws to whose unrelenting rigour
 we are every day exposed. The disposition of
 man, so averse to restraint, would soon suggest
 a method of dissolving the odious chains, which
 like those used by the Tuscan princes who
 fastened living men to dead bodies, punish for
 an entire century, the living for the dead. The
 disposition of man, so averse to restraint, would

* Philosophical survey of the South of Ireland. Page
 251. 2.

† Queen Anne, the last sovereign of the Stuart line, who
 after combining against her father, and violating the articles
 of Limerick, under pretence of strengthening the Protestant
 religion, gave a sanction to those laws, though her chief aim
 was to secure herself against the claims of her brother. Thus,
 religion often becomes an engine of policy, in the hands of
 sovereigns. Quere to Civilians: Should not oppressive laws
 cease, when the motives that gave rise to them subsist no more?

soon shake off the oppressive burden, if the importunate voice of conscience did not silence the cries of nature, and intimate to the Catholic, that, *death is preferable to perjury*. The remedy is in our own hands, and we daily refuse to apply it, though a small bandage could soon close up the bleeding veins of oppression, and a slight palliative remove the temporal grievances of which we complain. The churches are open; and though Mr. Wesley says, that *our oaths are light as air*, yet one oath taken against the conviction of our consciences, would level the fences, and *sweep away all the penal laws as so many spider's webs*, to use his *delicate* expression. This is an argument which speaks to the feelings of man, and which no sophistry can ever refute. The priests themselves are interested in the profanation: for, by entering into a collusion with their flocks, and using their magic powers to forgive all sins, *past, present, and to come*, they could permit them to graze on the *commons of legal indulgence*; and by turning them into a richer pasture, expect more milk and wool. Avarice has ever been the reproach of the sanctuary: it is recorded in scripture, that the priests of the old law used to take the best part of the victim to themselves, before it was offered to the God of Israel, and that Judas sold our Saviour for thirty pieces of silver. Mr. Wesley then must *charitably* presume, that no *priest* will forego his personal interest in compliment to his successor; and as it is his
interest

interest to impose upon his votaries, to slacken the reins, and shelter himself under the shade of the laws; either perjury is no part of his belief, or he must be too scrupulous, which in Mr. Wesley's opinion is *heresy* to believe. In ethics, as in mathematics, there are self-evident axioms; no proposition in Euclid is more clear than the following: "A person who does not think perjury a crime, would not forfeit a guinea from reluctance to an oath." The Roman Catholics forfeit every privilege, rather than take an oath against their conscience.

Are not they Adam's children? Have they not the same sensations of pain and pleasure as other men? Their vices and virtues, do they not run in the same channel with those of their Protestant neighbours? Are they not animated with the same desires of glory, allured by the blandishments of pleasure, courted by the charms of riches, as eager for the enjoyments of ease and opulence? If perjury be their creed, if their clergy be endued with the magic power of forgiving not only *present* but *future* sins, why do not they glide gently down the stream of legal liberty, instead of stemming the torrent of oppression? Why do not they qualify themselves for sitting in the senate, and giving laws to the land in concert with their countrymen, instead of being the continual objects of penal sanctions? It is, that they are diametrically the reverse of what they are represented.

Their

Their religion forbids them to sport with the awful name of the Divinity. They do not choose to impose upon their neighbours, or themselves, by perjury; nor run the risk of eternal death for a little honey.---Were it otherwise, in three weeks time they could all read their recantation, and be on a level with the rest of their fellow-subjects: they could imitate that philosopher who had two religions,--one for himself, and another for his country. Yet the archives of national justice can prove, that Catholics, reduced to the necessity of discovering against themselves, preferred the loss of their estates to the guilt of perjury, when a false oath could have secured them in their property. Notwithstanding this imputed creed, they prefer the smarting afflictions of the body, to the stinging remorse of the soul; and when worldly prosperities stand in competition with conscience, they rather choose to be its martyrs than executioners. Gentlemen, reconcile, if you can, perjurers from principle, with sufferers from delicacy of conscience, and I shall stile you the children of the *great Apollo*. But are not the Catholics a set of passive machines, veering at the breath of the Pope, who can dispense with them in any thing? 'Or what security can they give to Protestant governors, whilst they acknowledge his spiritual power?' If this be any objection to their loyalty, Catholic kings should banish their Catholic subjects, and introduce Protestants in their stead:---for, as the Roman Catholic faith is the same all over the world,

world, and that France and Spain are more convenient to the Pope than the Britannic islands, he would have more machines to move, more votaries to obey his mandates, and more facility in compassing his designs. In England and Ireland all the Protestants would oppose him; whereas, in Catholic kingdoms, if his power has such an unlimited sway over the conscience of man, as Mr. Wesley asserts, every subject, nay, kings themselves, would be bound to obey him. But Catholic subjects know, that if God must have his own, Cæsar must have his due. In his quality of pontiff, they are ready to kiss the pope's feet: but if he assume the title of conqueror, they are ready to bind his hands. The very ecclesiastical benefices, which are more in the spiritual line, are not at his disposal. When England had more to dread from him than now, a Catholic parliament passed the statute of pre-munire: the bishops and mitred abbots preferred their own temporal interest to that of the pope, and reserved the benefices to themselves, and the clergy under their jurisdiction. Charity begins at home, and I do not believe any Catholic so divested of it, as to prefer fifty pounds a year under the pope's government, to an hundred under that of a Protestant king. Queen Mary, so devoted to the pope's cause, both on account of her religion, and justice done to her mother by the inflexible resolution of the sovereign pontiff, still would not cede her temporal rights, nor those of her subjects, in compliment to his spiritual power. After the
reconciliation

reconciliation of her kingdom to the apostolical see, a statute was passed, enacting, that the pope's bulls, briefs, &c. should be merely confined to spirituals, without interfering with the independence of her kingdom, or the rights of her subjects. The history of Europe proclaims aloud, that the Roman Catholics are not passive engines in the hands of popes, and that they confine his power within the narrow limits of his spiritual province. They have often taken his cities, and opposed Paul's sword to Peter's keys, and *silenced the thunders of the Vatican* with the noise of the cannon. They know that Peter was a fisherman when kings swayed the sceptre, and the subsequent grandeur of his successor could never authorise him to alter the premitive institution that commands subjects to obey their rulers, and to give Cæsar his due.

With regard to his spiritual power, you will be surpris'd, Gentlemen, when I tell you, that from Lodowick Muggleton down to John Wesley, those who have instituted new sects among the Christians. have assumed more power than the pope dare to assume over the Catholics.

They may add or diminish: but, with regard to the pope, the landmarks are erected, and we would never permit him to remove them. If he attempted to preach up five sacraments instead of seven, we would immediately depose him. Mr. Wesley may alter his faith as often as he pleases, and prevail on others to do the same; but the pope can never alter ours: we acknowledge him indeed as head of the church,---for every

every society must have a link of union to guard against confusion and anarchy; and, without annexing any infallibility to his person, we acknowledge his title to precedence and preeminence. But in acknowledging him as the *first pilot to steer the vessel*, we acknowledge a compass by which he is to direct his course. He is to preserve the vessel, but never to expose it to shipwreck. Any deviation from the laws of God, the rights of nature, or the faith of our fathers, would be the fatal rock on which the pope himself would split. In a word, the pope is our first pastor; he may feed, but cannot poison us: we acknowledge no power in him, either to alter our faith, or corrupt our morals. If the pope's power were then rightly understood, his spiritual supremacy would give no more umbrage to the king of Great Britain, than the jurisdiction of a diocesan bishop. But deep-rooted prejudices can scarcely be removed; and little can be expected from the generality, when the learned themselves are hurried by the tide of popular error. From want of rightly understanding the case, and attention to the discriminating line drawn by the Catholics between the pope's spiritual and temporal power, Sir William Blackstone himself gave into the snare of vulgar delusion. This learned expositor of England's common law declares the Roman Catholics as well entitled to every legal indulgence as the other dissenters from the established religion, *maugre their real presence, purgatory, confessions, &c.* But still the Pope's ghost haunts him to such a degree,

a degree, that he would fain have the Catholics abjure his spiritual supremacy. But Sir William, who has exposed himself to the censure of Mr. Sheridan, in establishing the formidable right of conquest over Ireland, and to the animadversions of the divines, by declaring that an act of parliament *can alter the religion of the land*, (as if, by act of parliament we should all become 'Turks, be circumcised, and expect an earthly Paradise), has exposed himself to the reproaches of every smatterer in divinity, who could ask him, if in acknowledging the spiritual jurisdiction of the bishop of London, he encroached upon the privileges of the Lord Mayor.

But in talking of the power of parliament *to alter the religion of the land*, Sir William has argued from facts; and in talking of the *spiritual* power of the Pope, he must have argued from hear-say. The lawyer may be excused when he talks of spiritual powers; but what apology can be pleaded by the apostle and divite, who, like Tristram Shandy's priest, baptizes the child before he is born, and grants Popes and priests the power of forgiving all sins, not only *past* and *present*, but *sins to come*; this Mr. Wesley asserts: it is a surprising magic that *forgives* now, the sin which is to be committed a hundred years hence: let no one deprive Mr. Wesley of the glory of the *invention*. Past sins, in our belief, can be forgiven by Popes and priests, not as primary agents, but as subordinate instruments in the hands of the Divinity; not according to the

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absolute

absolute will of the priest, but according to the dispositions of the penitent, and the clauses of the covenant of mercy, which the priest can neither alter, nor disannul.

The dark recesses of the criminal conscience must be searched. The monster must be stifled in the heart that gave it birth. A sincere sorrow for past guilt, a firm resolution to avoid future lapses, and every possible atonement to the injured Deity, and the injured neighbour, are the previous and indispensable requisites. Take away any of the three conditions, and the Pope's and priest's absolutions are but empty sounds; the keys of the church rattle in vain: they are no more than the mutterings of sorcerers, or words of incantation pronounced over a dead body, without ever imparting to it the genial heat of animation and vitality. Popes nor priests can do no more than God himself---and the scriptures declare, that God will never forgive the sinner without sorrow and repentance. And the schoolmen dispute, whether, by an absolute power, he could raise to the beatific vision, a soul polluted with the defilements of guilt. If then the priests absolution be any plea against Roman Catholics, it may as well be said, that the promise of the Most High to pardon the repentant sinner, *although his sins were as red as scarlet*, encourages men to commit sin; or that a man may take an oath contrary to his conscience, under the idea that a subsequent repentance will gain forgiveness and pardon. " But is it not intolerable presumption in
" man

“man to arrogate such power?” Be it so; I am an apologist when I write in a public paper: controversy I leave to the schools. If I make my confession to a priest, what is it to my neighbour? Society will gain by the *pretended* superstition: for the most immoral Catholics are those who seldom or never frequent the sacraments. I look on the pretended conferences of Numa Pompilius with the nymph Egeria, as a mere fiction devised by that political prince. Yet I admire the wisdom of the legislator, who introduced a plan of softening the savage manners of his uncivilized subjects, and smoothing the asperity of stubborn nature by religious awe. Those who are unacquainted with the nature of confession, may consider it as *priest-craft*, yet neither master nor landlord will ever lose by the imposture; when their servants and tenants kneel to a priest, whose duty is to revive in their minds the notions of probity and virtue. Thus, the wisest of the Protestant churches have never discountenanced confession: the form of absolution, and the previous dispositions required on the part of the penitent are set down at large in the liturgy; and as to the power of forgiving sins granted to the ministers of religion, express mention is made of it in the scriptures. Mr. Wesley must acknowledge this power, whether it consists in the priestly absolution, or in the preaching of the gospel, or “in
“pious canticles, sung with a skilful tongue and
“harmonious voice, lifting the rising soul, and
E 2 “plunging

“ plunging it into a mystical slumber, as soothing
 “ and soft as the balm of Gilead.”*

Such Christians as acknowledge original sin, and the virtue of baptism to cancel the unavoidable debt, must acknowledge that the minister of religion effaces the stain by applying the elements. If the Catholics believe that by the institution of Christ, the minister of religion can forgive sins, they are convinced at the same time, that he is no more than a subordinate agent, who derives his power from a superior being, in absolving the adult, as he derives his power from the same source, when he purifies the soul of the infant. I know full well that God could change the heart of man, and forgive sins in young and old, without the interposition of a human being. The prophet, who was consulted by two Jewish kings, and before he would give an answer, called for a harp, could have received the prophetic inspiration, without touching the strings of the tuneful lyre. Christ could have restored the blind man to his sight without applying the mud to his eyes, and converted the world without exposing his apostles to martyrdom. But am I to bring him to an account for using intermediate agents; or

* See an abridgment of Wesley's journal, where he compares the impressions he made on his hearers to the *balm of Gilead*. As far as I can recollect, he relates in his large journal a surprising history of one of his acquaintances who fell into a pious slumber which deserves to be recorded in the history of the *Seven Sleepers*.

what I think to be an institution of the Divinity, is it not my duty to abide by it? Happy those who can save themselves without the assistance of any other! Thrice happy Mr. Wesley, who is already registered in the *book of life*, and empowered to grant *in-amissable* security to others for the anticipated enjoyment of eternal bliss. He can sum up the number of the holy souls who have climbed up the steps of the mystical ladder, and on the highest step of all, as on the ramparts of an impregnable fortress, reckon so many souls *confirmed* in a state of *in-amissable* sanctity*, whilst I am so miserable as not to know whether I am *worthy of love or hatred*, and have millions of times more reason than St. Paul to solicit the prayers of my fellow-christians, *lest that in praying for others, I myself may become a reprobate.*

In our communion, Gentlemen, we never hold forth our confessions and absolutions as licences for guilt, but as curbs to the passions. Our

* See Wesley's journal, where he declares, that on his visitation, he met so many *sanctified*, so many *justified*, and so many *confirmed* in love. *Qui potest capiat.* I cannot comprehend this mystical divinity. By confirmation in love, he must mean, that whoever believes himself once arrived to that happy state, can sin no more. I am glad to see a fellow creature *confirmed* in the love of God.—But I am sorry to find some so *ill confirmed* in the love of their neighbour, as to tell half Europe to their faces, that they are *perjurers*, and to apologize for a rabble, who set fire to their neighbours houses. This is what we call an *ardent* or *burning* love.

“ plunging it into a mystical slumber, as soothing
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priests make their confessions, as well as the laity; for no priest can absolve himself, nor flatter himself with impunity in committing *present* or *future crimes*. Our directors point out the path to the wayfaring pilgrim, between the two extremes of despair and *presumption*: to guard against the first, the gates of penance are thrown open, as so many avenues that lead to mercy: to guard against the second, the dread of God's judgments, the uncertainty of the last hour, the abuses of God's graces, which, if neglected, swell the long list of crimes and punishments, are held forth in all their terrors.

We represent to the guilty conscience, sinking under a weight of anxieties and crimes, the penitent thief crying out for mercy, and obtaining pardon. We represent to the obstinate and presumptuous sinner, the impenitent thief, threatening reprobation. We know, that whilst the serpent is raised up in the wilderness, no wound is incurable: we know, on the other hand, that, when criminal cities had filled up the measure of their iniquity, in vain did Abraham lift up his hands to Heaven, to solicit their pardon. If we place between the Judge and the sinner a great Mediator; though the Mediator and Judge be the same, yet we place between the Mediator and sinner an awful Judge. We earnestly recommend the frequent use of confession, because man is so frail that he stands in frequent need of it. But still we recommend it, not as loose reins to humour the sinners

sinners passions, but as a stiff bridle to check their fallies. We never encourage our penitents to new disorders, but inspire them with detestation for former guilt, and fear of swelling the score; for we know the danger of affronting mercy by new crimes, but cannot know the fatal point, where paternal goodness is limited. Thus we lead our penitents in the intermediate path between despair and presumption, by the delicate clue of hope and fear, until they reach the critical term, where the soul, after bursting the chains of its earthly prison, takes its flight into the vast region of spirits; and even when arraigned before the judgment seat, we tremble for its destiny.---Such, Gentlemen, is the nature of confession, whether you consider it in a useful, or abusive light.

Had Mr. Wesley, who, after publishing twenty-six volumes, knows every thing, even the *language of birds*, known its nature, he would not have adduced it as an argument in justification of intolerance, but rather left the *imputed power* of forgiving all kinds of *sins, past, present, and to come*, as a flower of rhetoric to grace the garden of the Cynics. Away then with his *priestly absolutions* and *dispensing powers*. He assumes more power than any priest could pretend to.---Away with *violation of faith with heretics*: we acknowledge no heresy in the duties of social life, or the obligations of Christian virtues.

Such,

Such, Gentlemen, are the principles of the Roman Catholics: they are quite the reverse of Mr. Wesley's charges. Let the impartial public decide, whether a set of perjurers authorised to commit all kinds of crimes with impunity, (such as the Roman Catholics are painted) would suffer one week on the score of conscience. In our faith we follow the maxim of St. James, "Whoever transgresses the law in one point, is guilty of all." The same rule holds good in morals. In allowing that a man is bad in committing one crime, we do not allow that he is guiltless in committing another. The sacrifice must be entire; and grace never sanctifies a divided victory. The fabric of our religion is so closely cemented---the links of the chain, which unites all the articles of our faith, are so fastened within each other, that if you take off one of the links, or loosen a stone in the edifice, the whole system is entirely destroyed. If then all the horrors fixed upon us by the dark pencil of mis-representation, be articles of our belief, when we disclaim them upon oath, we are real *heretics*, and as well intitled to every legal indulgence, as those who go to church, and swear against *Transubstantiation*.

We admire the integrity of Regulus, who suffered the most exquisite tortures, rather than violate an oath given to his enemies. In the administration of distributive justice, the magistrate must give credit to the Heathen, who swears by his false gods, to the Jew, who swears by

by the Old Testament, and to the Turk, who swears by the Koran. In cases of life and property, he gives credit to the oath of a Roman Catholic, whether he appears as a witness or juror. In giving no credit to the oaths of Roman Catholics, when they disclaim *perjury, dispensations for frauds, rebellion, treachery, &c.* he betrays his judgment, and insults humanity. But, if judgment has been ever betrayed, or humanity insulted, they are now betrayed and insulted by those persons who compose what they call the *Protestant Associations*, of whom Mr. Wesley is become the apologist. In taking up the pen to conclude this letter, I received their *Appeal to the people of Great Britain*, printed in London by J. W. Pasham.

Mr. Wesley, who has abridged *his own journal* to give it a greater circulation, has abridged this six-penny pamphlet, in his first letter. In the beginning of the American war, he published his *Calm Address*, in order to unite the colonies to the mother country. The *balm of Gilead* proving ineffectual beyond the Atlantic, he now has recourse to caustics at home. Three years ago he intended to unite us :---now he intends to divide us. Thus we find Penelope's web in his *religious looms* : what he wove three years ago, he now unravels.

In this *Appeal*, on which he passes such encomiums, and the design whereof he declares to be *benevolent*, you can perceive the dormant seeds of antiquated fanaticism sprouting anew,
and

and vegetating into religious frenzy, which has deluged the earth with an ocean of calamities, and which would give Heathen princes room to glory, that the gospel has never been preached in their dominions. An apothecary's shop has never been stocked with more drugs, than this *Appeal* is stocked with massacres. They have inserted in it the bull, *In Cæna Domini*, which has never been received in any Catholic kingdom: and from an old book which was foisted on the public in the beginning of the Reformation, as containing the fees of the Roman chancery, they conclude, that a Roman Catholic can sleep with a woman in a church, and commit there other enormities, by paying nine shillings; and that he may murder a man and commit incest*, on paying seven shillings and six-pence, though shillings and six-pences are English coins, not current in Italy; and in Catholic countries, the murderer expires on the wheel, and whoever commits incest, or profanes the churches by carnal sins, is burnt at the stake. What is more surprising, Gentlemen, these new apostles of the *Gordonian association*, who, to use the words of our old friend Hudibras,

“ Their holy faith do found upon

“ The sacred text of pike and gun,”

imagine that they are the delegates of Heaven for the salvations of souls: their hands do not

* See the “ *Appeal from the Protestant Association*,” page 18. Printed by Pasham.

brandish the glittering spear on the American plains, where D'Estaing and Prevost dispute the laurel; but, like Samuel deploring the loss of Saul, their eyes are bathed in tears, and their bowels yearn for millions of spirits that have no existence but in the prescience of God, who can pity an error, and forgive it, and who is more concerned in their salvation, than Lord George Gordon or Mr. Wesley. I am afraid, Gentlemen, that you mind your own souls and bodies more than you mind those of others. To rouse you from your spiritual lethargy, and inflame you with some sparks of love for your neighbour, I send you a piece of a sermon taken from the "Appeal of the associations." After deploring the loss of millions of common people, who are prohibited from reading the scriptures, (though it were charity to teach them first how to spell), and who have souls as infinite in value and duration, as the proudest prelates, or highest monarchs upon earth,---they go on: "To tolerate
 " Popery, is to be instrumental to the perdition
 " of immortal souls now existing, and of millions
 " of spirits, that at present have no existence
 " but in the prescience of God; and is the direct
 " way to provoke the vengeance of an holy
 " and jealous God, to bring down destruction on
 " our fleets and armies."*

* See the "Appeal from the Protestant Associations," page 18, and cry out, *ohone! ohone! ohone!*

I really

I really imagined that the Protestant associations were not so cruel as to refuse me mercy, and exclude me from the kingdom of Heaven, if I lead an honest, sober, and virtuous life. I am convinced, that several of Admiral Rodney's sailors are Roman Catholics, and that the bullets which *told so well*, in mauling poor Langara, were fired by hands that *crossed* a *Popish* forehead. Oliver Cromwell, *seeking the Lord*, and preaching upon the Sabbath-day, in a leather breeches and buff waistcoat, with his trusty sabre by his side †, did not scruple to enter into a confederacy with Cardinal Mazarine, against the Spaniards: it was equal to England which of the two was foremost in the breach, the French dragoon with his whiskers, after saying *Hail Mary*, or the *Round head* with his leather cap, after *groaning in the spirit*. Spain lost Dunkirk, and England triumphed.

King William, who, to his honour, could never be prevailed on to violate the articles of Limerick, had six thousand Roman Catholics in his army, when he fought the battle of the Boyne: and the Catholics and Protestants of Switzerland maintain their independence against all the powers on the Continent, in consequence of their union. But the Protestant associations, like Ezekial, have swallowed a book in which are written *verses*, and *lamentations*, and *woe*! Already their luminous souls, enlightened by the prophetic

† See Gregori Leti, in his Life of Cromwell.

spirit, see future times unlocking their distant gates, and pouring forth millions of monsters; and, from a desire to procure the salvation of Adam's children, it is to be dreaded, that at long run, they will imitate the holy fanatics of Denmark, who, in order to procure Heaven for young infants, after being baptized, used to slaughter them in their cradles.

AN HUMBLE
 REMONSTRANCE
 TO THE

SCOTCH AND ENGLISH INQUISITORS,

BY WAY OF

AN APOSTROPHE.

GENTLEMEN,

AS a colour to your disorderly and unwarrantable proceedings, you impose on the ignorant by your cant words of *violation of faith with heretics*. Like Boileau's heroes, you are ransacking old books, canvassing legends of exaggerated massacres*, and like scholars, who, after repeating their

* In their Appeal they relate that a hundred thousand Protestants were massacred in 1641: at that time there were thirty Catholics for every Protestant, and a hundred Protestants escaped for every single Protestant that perished. Let now a balance be struck, and the number of inhabitants calculated, and Ireland must have been but one large city, as crowded as the streets of Rome in the times of Marius

their lesson, fling about the bones and skulls piled up in charnel-houses, you haunt the living with the images of the dead. Modern philosophy proves the existence of colours in the eye, but not in exterior objects; what is true in the physical world, is more so in your system of ethics:---the purple hue and black die in which you would fain mis-represent us to our king and the public, are the result of your organs; and the abortives you lay at our doors, derive their existence from yourselves. You would fain deprive us of the rights of mankind, for crimes we never committed; for thoughts which we disclaim, and whereof the scrupineer and searcher of hearts is the only competent judge. Thus you imitate the tyrant,

Marius and Sylla. This massacre, which should be effaced from the records of the nation, as well as from the memory of man, was begun by a fanatical soldiery, who intended to extirpate Papists and Malignants. Whoever has a mind to be informed about this massacre, may read Doctor Warner, Mr. Brooker, Trial of the Roman Catholics, and Doctor Curry's Historical Memoirs, and his History of the Civil Wars of Ireland. But whoever has a mind to be led astray, let him read Sir John Temple's (secretary to Ireton) stupid legend.—The Appeal of the Protestant Associations,—and Hume's Theatrical Description, who nevertheless reduces greatly the number, which could never amount to five or six thousand. He relates, that in hatred to the English, the Irish used to *wound their cows*, and in this torturing situation turn them into the woods to prolong their sufferings. In my opinion, under such a government as was then, they wanted more to eat them. And I am sorry that the gravity of the historian has permitted Mr. Hume to rank *cows* amongst the *martyrs of religion*.

who put an inoffensive citizen to death, because in his uneasy slumbers, disturbed by the guilt of injuries offered to others, he dreamt that he was cutting his throat. Our actions are the best exponents of our sentiments. Our conduct is peaceable. But, as for you, your actions and conduct betray you, as the roaring, and impression of his claws, betray the lion. And woe to the game that is unprotected by the keeper! In an enlightened age, when the cheerful eyes of philosophy and religion cannot bear the sight of frantic fanaticism, banished from all quarters of Europe, it found shelter among you, with its distorted features, and numerous train of calamities and evils. Generous hosts! and worthy of such a guest, you sheltered, you warmed, you gave new life, to a refugee entitled to your patronage. And as a prodigal child, thriving ill in foreign countries, you received him with the arms of a tender parent, you clad him in his *first robes*, you killed a fat calf, which the burning rafters of your neighbours houses have roasted, and, at his reception, the symphony of *pious raptures* was heard in your streets.

Whilst in Ireland, the ministers of religion, in conformity to the gospel rule, were preaching love and benevolence; whilst in Ireland sixty thousand armed Protestants, without any controul but the great principles of honour and valour, enemy to degenerate cruelty, were protect-
ing

ing the peaceable citizen and defenceless cottager, without any distinction of sects or parties; whilst the Irish Volunteers were setting to the world the rare example of armed legions, without the severe subordination of military discipline, behaving with that noble decorum which precludes complaints, and attracts admiration, *your* pulpits resounded with the harsh language of the Savage Leader haranguing his warriors, and throwing down the hatchet as a signal of destruction to the *neighbouring tribes*. Some of your women, divested of tenderness and pity, so peculiar to the fair and delicate sex, reviving in their persons the savage sternness of the Spartan matrons urging on their sons to battle, rejoiced in the open day seeing their neighbours houses in a blaze; and blessed God that they lived to see the day when *Popish abominations* were purified with fire. One should imagine, that such of you as petitioned the king and parliament against granting a free trade to Ireland, should rest satisfied, without petitioning against your inoffensive neighbours. If you glory in the purity of your religion, and in treading in the steps of its author, treat us as Christ himself would treat us if he were on earth. He deprived no man of his property, nor of the indulgence and protection of the laws. If you glory in the purity of the Christian religion, call to mind that it suggests humility, and deference to people of superior power and judgment. Your king, your peers, and your commons, are deemed the first in dignity and wisdom; but I forget

that you are well versed in the Bible, which says, "He that is first amongst you, let him be the last." The scripture must be fulfilled. Take then the lead, and force them to trample on their own laws, and to banish their subjects.

Mention no longer *violation of faith with Heretics*. You *violate* all the laws of civil society; in dissolving the ties of friendship, and pointing out your fellow-subjects as the victims of legal severity, you split and rend the nation. You weaken its power, and trespass upon the respect due to your rulers, whom, instead of being the fathers of their people, you would fain force to become the heads of a faction.

You *violate* the sacred rights of nature. Her bountiful author declares, that he makes his sun shine on the good and bad. The light of the sun, the brilliancy of the stars, the sweetness of the fruit, the balsamic effluvia of flowers, are dispensed with a liberal hand to the Heathen and Idolater. Must you deprive your neighbours of gifts common to all Adam's children, because they stick to a religion which all your forefathers professed, and which (if wrong) can hurt no man but themselves? In vain do you attempt to impose upon the public, with extracts of spurious canons, obsolete decrees, patches of councils, and legends of massacres, in order to fix a creed on us. The world knows that Roman Catholics sway the sceptre of authority in kingdoms and republics. The very nature then of civil society

is a manifest contradiction to the creed you impute to us. For if we are no more than machines veering at the breath of Popes and priests, whom neither conscience, religion, the sacred ties of an oath, nor the fear of God's judgment can restrain, patentees of guilt, and sure of impunity, we could not form a society for the space of one year. For in such a society, the notions of vice and virtue would be confounded, the blackest crimes, and the purest virtue reduced to the same level, the discipline of morals destroyed, the harmony of the body politic dissolved, the brother armed against the brother, and if by a kind of miracle, in such a cursed number of men, a second Abel could be found, the earth would soon groan with the cries of his blood. If divines have attempted to demonstrate the existence of God from the nature of civil society, the very nature of civil society demonstrates the falshood of the creed with which you compliment us. And, if the gloomy plan of such a horrid republic pleases your imaginations, go and lay the foundations of it in some distant part of the earth. Be yourselves its members and governors, for no Christian could live there.

When the delicate pencils of the Gibbons, Reynolds, and Marmontels, will paint the political scenery of the eighteenth century : when on the extensive canvas they will represent the gloom of long-reigning prejudice, scattering, as the

the clouds of night at the approach of the rising sun: when they will paint the poniard, drenched in human blood, snatched from the hand of stern persecution; the French praying in concert with the Americans; the Armenians invited into Russia; the order of Military Merit established in favour of Protestants in the palace of a Catholic king; Ireland rising from the sea, covered with her Fabii and Scipios, pointing their spears to distant shores, and holding forth the olive and sheaf of corn to their neighbours of all denominations: when they will contrast the present to former times; shew the happy result of a change of system, and prove that the world is refined,---You, painted in as frightful attitudes as the groupe of figures in Raphael's Judgment, with stern fanaticism in your countenances, a bible in one hand and a faggot in the other,---you, I say, will be an exception to the general rule: the world will read with surprise, that in seventeen hundred and eighty, there have been fanatics in England and Scotland, that gave birth to so many illustrious writers. Your transactions shall be recorded in the appendix to the history of Jack Straw and Wat Tyler, and your chaplains and apologists shall be ranked with James Nailor and Hugh Peters.

(And thus, Gentlemen, I finish my Apostrophe).

SHOULD

S H O U L D Mr. Wesley, or any of his associators, think it worth their while to make any remarks on these letters, they cannot justly expect a rejoinder. They have started forth the unprovoked aggressors, and, not satisfied with attempting to deprive the Roman Catholics of their rights as subjects, they have slandered and aspersed their characters. I am no stranger to the ground on which they will attack me: either the rusty weapons of old councils, or a catalogue of old massacres will be drawn out of their mouldering arsenals. Arms, as ill suited to the eighteenth century, as Saul's helmet was to David's head. I will be attacked with the Council of Lateran, the wars of the Albigenes, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, &c.---I am a Christian, and deny the transmigration of souls. I am nowise concerned in past transactions; or if my religion be charged with them, I have in my hands the cruel arms of retaliation. I shall divide the charge into two branches;---barbarous actions, and barbarous doctrine. If Mr. Wesley reckons all those who are not, or have not been, in communion with the see of Rome, in the number of Heretics, and himself amongst them, as doubtless he does, I shall then lay at his door, all the abominable and seditious doctrines taught by those whom he styles heretics, from the time of Simon the Magician, down to our days. The impurities of the Gnostics, the enchantments

ments of the Ophites, the perjury and frauds of the Priscillianists, the errors of the Albigenses, and millions besides. If from these distant times I make a transition to a nearer æra, I shall prove to him from the works, not only of insignificant writers of the reformed religion, but of the very founders of the reformation, who assumed as much power over their followers, as the Pope assumes over the Catholics, that they taught doctrines cruel, immoral, and seditious, and that the most horrid barbarities were committed in consequence of those doctrines.

Calvin not only commits Heretics to the flames, but moreover writes a book in justification of his proceedings; and in his commentaries on the Scriptures, he teaches, that *usury** is lawful. Luther, Melancton, and Bucer, have authorized polygamy, and permitted a prince to marry a second wife during the life of the first. The decrees of the synod of Dort, caused great persecutions in Holland. Knox and his followers propagated the gospel with fire and sword. I have

* In the news-paper this word is made *venery* by an error of the press, which Mr. O'Leary alludes to at the conclusion; and for which, and some other errors of smaller note, the printer made the following apology:

"The Printer assures Mr. O'Leary, that the errors of the press, which he complains of, were not occasioned by any design or wilful neglect, but by the lateness of the night, and the hurry unavoidably attendant on news paper publications."

already

already mentioned the doctrine of John Hufs, and his master Wickliff, so inimical to sovereigns.

If I take a review of the greatest champions who, within these four hundred years, have undertaken the Herculean task of overthrowing the kingdom of Antichrist, I see them all claiming a mission from Heaven, as well as Mr. Wesley, and still overturning thrones and empires. I see Germany deluged with oceans of blood; Boors headed by fanatical preachers, promising the deluded multitude to receive the bullets in their sleeves, attacking their princes and sovereigns; Taylors paving their way to the throne over heaps of mangled carcases, in order to re-establish the *kingdom of Jerusalem*; *Apostles* heading armies, and commanding, by their last will, their dearly beloved children, reforming from *the errors of Popery*, to make a drum* of their skins, in order to rouse the saints to battle; the streets of London ensanguined with the gore of peaceable citizens, destroyed by the Fifth-monarchy men, proclaimed king Jesus; communion-tables stained with the blood of Protestant bishops; scaffolds reeking with the blood of Protestant kings; solemn leagues and covenants sealed for the extirpation of Papists and Malignants†, and entered into with as much eagerness as Annibal entered Italy, after swearing the destruction of the Romans, upon the Carthaginian altars; the poniard lifted by the hand of religious madness, and

* Zisca, a follower of John Hufs.

† A name given to the Protestants of the established church.

committed

committed such slaughter and carnage, that people propose the disagreeable and odious problem, "Whether religion has been of greater use than "harm to mankind?"

Still I am inclined to exculpate religion from the blame of calamities which can be traced back to the rage of fanatical preachers, the cruelty of governors, the policy and craft of ministers of state, as to their genuine sources. "Matters "were first embroiled in the cabinet," says Rousseau, "and then the leading men stirred up "the common people in the name of God." In the midst of this religious rage, I see humanity asserting her right, and resuming her empire: I see Catholic governors refusing to comply with the imperious mandates of a cruel king, and a no-less cruel queen, at the time of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and Catholic bishops saving all the Protestants in their dioceses: I see in Ireland, the great Protestant Bishop Bedel with his clans, and thousands, in the free exercise of their religion, in the midst of a Catholic army, whilst a Protestant bishop bleeds at the foot of a communion-table in Scotland, for reading the English liturgy:--Thus I am convinced that people of all denominations would be happy together, if their clergy recommended mutual love and benevolence, and that if we divested ourselves of passion, religion would never arm the hand with the poniard. If Innocent the third excommunicated the heretics of his time, Innocent the eleventh entered into a league with Protestant kings.

Thus,

Thus, Gentlemen, you see how the world changes. On the wide theatres spread by the revolutions of time, new characters daily appear, and different circumstances are productive of different events. It is in vain to ransack old councils, imperial constitutions, and ecclesiastical canons, whether genuine or spurious, against Heretics, in order to brand the present generation of Catholics. In the very city, I mean Rome, where the general council of Lateran was held, Protestants are caressed, and live with ease and comfort. Travellers agree, that it is the theatre of civility, benevolence and politeness. In the German empire, where, by the constitutions of Frederick the Second, Heretics were condemned to the stake, all religions enjoy full liberty. In some places, the Catholic priest and Calvinist minister officiate in the same church, and bishopricks are alternately governed by Catholic and Protestant Prelates. All laws, whether civil or ecclesiastical, are done away by time, when the motives that gave them rise subsist no longer. And none but a slave to bigotry and prejudice will confound the eighteenth with the thirteenth century. Because Father Roger Bacon was imprisoned as a forcerer, on account of his extensive knowledge in astronomy, perspective, &c. or that Gallileo's doctrine of the motion of the earth was condemned by a numerous tribe of divines, headed by seven cardinals, under the eyes of the Roman pontiff, must it be obtruded on the public, that the Roman

Catholics must consider the motion of the earth round the sun, *as heresy*: or firmly believe that there is magic or witchcraft in the *Camera obscura*, because Father Bacon, who described it, was seven years confined in prison? Hence from the opinions of men, or the actions of Popes, or the disciplinary canons of councils, or the proceedings of bishops who composed them, in one age, there is no arguing to the belief of men in another. Popes have attempted to absolve subjects from their allegiance to their sovereigns: it is no more an article of my belief that they could do it by the authority of the keys, than it is an article of my belief, that I can strike a king on the cheek, because Calvin teaches, that "Earthly
 " princes abdicate their authority when they
 " erect themselves against God, and that we
 " ought rather spit in their faces, than obey
 " them."* Mr. Wesley and the *Association* would do well to analyze some of that Doctor's writings and Knox's sermons, and to insert them in their Appeal, as a contrast to the obsolete canons which they have extracted from Sir Richard Steele's appendix:-----*Erect themselves against God*, is a phrase merely spiritual, and of a fatal tendency, because the broachers of such doctrines think it a sufficient plea against kings not inclined to receive the *truths*, they themselves are prompted to preach; and as every

* Calvin on Daniel, chap. 6. v. 22.

one thinks himself in the right, error has many chances for the sword of authority. But in my opinion, *Peter's pence*, not Peter's keys, have founded the claims of Popes, when they made the unsuccessful attempt. To the investiture of bishoprics in Germany, which brought on the great broils between Popes and Emperors, was annexed some temporal emolument founded upon compacts between the two powers. The English monarchs made their kingdom tributary to the apostolical see. If then, pontiffs have deviated from the primitive paths in meddling in the temporals of kings, the reason is obvious. They had prescription to plead; oaths and treaties to support their claims. In the conduct of kings choosing them for arbiters of their quarrels, and liege lords of their territories, they found a specious pretext to punish the infraction of treaties, and the breach of prerogative. A repetition of the same acts, introduced custom. Custom, supported by time, obtains the force of a law. The law bound the parties concerned, and the violation of the law has been attended with penalties. Hence the deposition of an emperor was more owing to the code and pandects of Justinian, than to the gospel of Christ. Hence Henry the Eighth, and Queen Elizabeth's *pretended* danger from the Popes who threatened them, and attempted in vain to absolve their subjects from their allegiance.

The Popes considered themselves as the liege
G 2 lords

lords of the kingdom of England, after receiving for so many years a tribute from its sovereigns: they never absolved the Catholics of Denmark and Sweden, from their allegiance to Protestant kings, because they could plead no stipulations. According to the canon law, a hundred years prescription can be pleaded against the church of Rome. A hundred years and more have elapsed, since any Pope has attempted to absolve subjects from their allegiance; though armies have been poured into his territories, and his cities taken by princes. Kings have nothing to dread from an abrogated power abolished by the same cause that gave it rise.-----But if empire be founded in grace, and not in the rights of nature, or the laws of civil society; if a deviation from the immutable truth that saw the world in its cradle, and is to preside at its dissolution, be a plea against kings; let them be eternally armed with the scales of the Leviathan, against the barbed irons to which they are exposed, from those who think themselves the only persons enlightened with the rays of Gospel knowledge. Nothing then is to be apprehended from Popes. Less is to be apprehended from spurious canons, or the *memory* of councils which gave up the *ghost* six hundred years ago. And any inference from the proceedings of the fathers of the council of Lateran, or obsolete texts of the canon law against former Heretics, to alarm the Protestants of our days, is the fruit of ignorance or malice, or both.

both.-----The Protestants of our days sway the sceptre of authority. Kingdoms and republics, laws, and institutions, fœderal unions, and civil compacts, blessings in peace, and triumphs in war, the allegiance of their subjects, and protection, the result of allegiance, record them in the annals of fame, and put them on the same level with the Cæsars to whom tribute and submission are due. How are they connected with the motley rabble of Heretics, who appeared and disappeared in former times, overturning and attacking church and state, and attacked by both in their turn. No state acknowledged their power. No band of civil union linked them together;---no subjects swore allegiance to them,---no Catholic recognized a king, parliament, or magistrate amongst the Albigenes, whom people dignify with the title of Protestants; and whom Protestant powers would consider as the pest and bane of society, if such were now in their dominions. Disciples of the Manicheans, they admitted two supreme and independent principles; and granted two wives, called Colla and Colliba, to the God of Truth. Had their doctrine been confined to mere speculations, in an age more enlightened than the thirteenth century, when the council of Lateran was held, in all appearance humanity would pity them, and philosophy would smile at their errors.

But this wild theory was still surpassed by the most monstrous practices. They considered marriage

riage as a state of perdition, but chastity was not one of their vows.

More could be said, but I am afraid that my readers already blush; and whoever dignifies the Albigenses with the title of Protestants, in order to inflame the rage, and kindle the rancour of fellow-subjects, by a recital of the ill treatment of those pretended martyrs, should not only blush, but hide himself. Let none imagine, that whatever is mentioned in the sessions of a general council, is an article of faith. There are decrees of discipline which are at the discretion of kingdoms and provinces, either to reject or adopt. There are articles of faith, which, in our opinion, neither time, place, or circumstances can alter. Thus, the Council of Trent, which commands the Roman Catholics, under pain of *anathema*, or curse, to believe the necessity of baptism, and the reality of original sin, is universally received in all Catholic countries, as far as it confines itself to the decision of speculative points, and proposes them as articles of belief. But, where the same council decrees, that the manor or land on which a duel is fought, with the connivance of the owner, should be confiscated and applied to pious uses, it is rejected; though the motive of the decree be laudable, as it tends to suppress vice and restrain the passions; yet, as the means, such as the forfeiture of lands, &c. are quite out of the spiritual line, this decree of discipline is not
received

received. By the same rule, two things are to be considered relative to the Council of Lateran, often quoted, and as often misapplied. The fathers of that council have anathematized the errors of the Albigenses so repugnant to reason, morality, and the principles of revealed religion, and every similar error, extolling itself against the orthodox faith. So far they confined themselves within the limits of their spiritual provinces, and so far every Roman Catholic submits to their decrees. But when they proceeded further, and granted the lands of the persons whom they condemned as *heretics*, to the Catholics who would take possession of them; no Roman Catholic is concerned in a verdict that disposes of temporal property: For, neither Popes nor councils have been appointed as the supreme and *infallible* arbiters of succession to thrones, the transfer of property, or temporal affairs, by him who refused to compromise matters between two brothers, and declared, that *his kingdom is not of this world*. Nor is it to be presumed, that the ambassadors who assisted at the council, would betray the interests of their kings who often excepted against the competency of spiritual tribunals, as to the decision of temporal rights. And as to the distinction between articles of faith, and canons of discipline, we find it even in the New Testament.

The same apostles, who preached the divinity of Christ, which we all believe, decreed in a council, that the Christians should abstain from the use
of

of blood, and the flesh of strangled animals*. We believe the doctrine they preached: we overlook the discipline they established, because the prohibition was temporary. The doctrine is permanent: opinions are fugitive: laws, discipline and decrees vary with time. We are but little concerned in the transactions of the twelfth or thirteenth century. We are a new world raised on the ruins of the former, and if hitherto we could not agree as Christians, *it is high time to live together as men.* There is land enough for us all; and it is by far better to see towns and cities rearing their heads on the banks of our rivers, than to see our fertile country depopulated by intolerance. Let religion be left out of the case. Whigs and Tories, Guelphes and Gibelins † may repeat the same creed, and be still divided. The French and Sicilians went to the same churches to sing their *hallelujahs* upon an Easter Sunday, when soon after, the groans of bleeding victims began to mingle with the harmonious sound of chiming bells. The Dutch and English were Protestants, when the first massacred the latter in the island of Amboyna. Had the sufferers been of a different persuasion from that of the aggressors, religion would appear as the chief character in the two tragedies. If speculative errors be punishable, there is a day of reckoning: and eternity is long

* Acts. 15th chap.

† Two formidable factions in the time of the disputes between the Popes and Emperors.

enough

enough for *retribution*. But during the short span of life, checkered with so many anxious cares, let us not resemble those savages who glory in dispeopling the earth, and carrying the mangled heads of their fellow-creatures on the tops of their reeking spears, as so many trophies of their barbarous victory. In vain do we give ourselves up to hatred and vengeance. We soon discover that such cruel pleasure was never adapted to the heart of man; that in hating others we punish ourselves; that humanity disclaims violence; and that the law of God, in commanding us to love our neighbour, has consulted the most upright and reasonable dictates of the human heart. The world is tired of religious disputes, and it is high time for you, Gentlemen, to be tired of me.

It is time to agree to a truce, and leave the field to such champions as are willing to engage in national and political contests, infinitely more useful to the public, than the *thread-spun* arguments of polemical divinity, decrees of councils, or obsolete canons.

Should any of the champions of the eighty-five legions of Glasgow, or any of their allies and confederates sound the trumpet, I shall not prepare myself for battle. If I attempted to throw fanaticism into ridicule, they are welcome to discharge at me arrows repositied in the quivers of the *Spanish Friar* and the *Duenna*. Of what use is it to the public, if I have recourse to *Chrysal*, or the *Adventures of a Guinea*, where our modern

dern apostles are taken off in the conference between Momus and Mother Brimstone.

If the attack be serious, the weapons will be taken from the mouldering arsenals of old councils, Pope's decrees, and obsolete canons. There it will be a repetition of the same thing, *for ever and for aye*, to use the words of old Robin Hood. But should Mr. Wesley, or Archibald Drummond, or any apostle belonging to the *eighty-five societies*, intend to be of use to the public, I shall co-operate with their pious endeavours, with all the veins in my heart.

We have obtained of late the privilege of planting tobacco In Ireland, and our tobacco-nists want paper. Let Mr. Wesley then come with me, as the *curate* and barber went to *shave* and *bless* the library of Don Quixote. All the old books, old canons, sermons, and so forth, tending to kindle feuds, or promote rancour, let us fling them out at the windows. Society will lose nothing. The tobacco-nist will benefit by the spoils of *antiquity*. And if, upon mature deliberation, we decree that Mr. Wesley's Journal, and his apology for the Association's *appeal*, should share the same fate with the old buckrams, we will procure them a gentle fall. After having rocked ourselves in the large and hospitable cradle of the Free-press, where the peer and the commoner, the priest and the alderman, the friar and swadler, can stretch themselves at full length, provided they be not too churlish, let us

us laugh at those who breed useleſs quarrels, and ſet to the world the bright-example of toleration and benevolence,

A peaceable life and a happy death to all Adam's children! May the miniſters of religion of every denomination, whether they pray at the head of their congregations in embroidered veſtments, or black gowns, ſhort coats, grey locks, powdered wigs, or black curls, inſtead of inflaming the rabble, and inſpiring their hearers with hatred and animofity for their fellow creatures, recommend love, peace, and harmony!

In my univerſal prayer, Gentlemen, let me not forget the compoſitor, who, in Tueſday's paper, made me fix a falſe doctrine upon Calvin. Inſtead of *Calvin taught that uſury is lawful*; he makes me ſay, *Calvin taught that venery is lawful*; and, inſtead of ſaying, *Hence from the opinions of men, or the actions of popes, &c. in one age, there is no arguing to the belief of men in another*; inſtead of *arguing*, he makes me ſay *agreeing*.

Thus, by the tranſpoſition of types, and change of words, a compoſitor has more magic than Circe, who metamorphoſed Ulyſſes crew into wild beaſts. For compoſitors can change an old Uſurer into a young Venus,---*uſury* into *venery*, and a wrangling *argument* into a cordial *agreement*; and by the ſame rule he can change the *ace of diamonds* into *Sancho's dapple*, a *frier* into a *fiſe*, and *Wesley* into a *whiſtle*! God grant him more exactneſs in printing

printing this ; and grant yourselves and the whole world, peace, health and prosperity, and grant the curious searchers of old books, more humanity, and less controversy.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

your most affectionate,

and humble servant,

ARTHUR O'LEARY.

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